

# Health and Social Services Committee

**HSS(2)-10-06(p5)**

**Meeting date: Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**Venue: Committee Room 3, Senedd, National Assembly for Wales**

**Title: Home Oxygen Service**

## **Purpose**

This paper details the progress of a recovery plan to address issues that have arisen following the introduction of the new home oxygen contract on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006.

## **Background**

Members will be aware that a recovery plan was initiated to address the problems associated with the supply of oxygen after the contract was implemented.

## **Summary**

To update members of progress being made with the recovery plan.

## **Consideration**

The strategic objectives of the plan are to:

- achieve contract response times;
- timely supply for new patients;
- eliminate the backlog of valid orders by 31 May – now substantially achieved; and
- complete a managed, orderly withdrawal of pharmacies by 31 July.

Officials have held regular meetings with Air Products and the Department of Health throughout. They have also been involved in two series of regional meetings with LHBs to discuss the principles of the plan; and a further series will occur early in June to finalise arrangements.

LHBs have compiled data on pharmacies supplying specific patients. Early this month they will also participate in a project to validate Home Oxygen Order Form (HOOF) data with GP data. This should identify the total number of oxygen patients; including those already supplied by the company; those supplied by both company and community pharmacy; and intermittent users who have yet to present a requirement for fresh supplies.

The company will then implement a phased programme to deliver a complete supply to their concentrator patients who are also receiving cylinders from community pharmacy and agree appropriate supply dates with intermittent users thereby facilitating withdrawal of community pharmacy.

Air Products has set up a specific unit dedicated to data cleansing which will ensure that HOOFs are accurate in every respect, so that information will become more reliable, and patient details are reliable.

There were no problems associated with the provision of oxygen over the Bank Holiday Easter and Whitsun weekends. Data from Air Products states that as of 15 May they were providing >90% of oxygen therapies they knew were required to approximately 5100 patients across Wales.

The current picture across LHBs varies considerably, with Flintshire having 90% of their patients serviced by Air Products, but Bridgend with only 71%. There is no doubt that where LHBs are actively verifying their patient database and driving the process, progress with assimilation is quicker.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications directly associated with this paper.

## **Action for Committee**

There is no specific action for committee. Members are requested to note that officials are continuing discussions on commissioning an independent evaluation of the first 3 months to identify weaknesses and develop appropriate procedures to prevent such issues arising in the future.

Brian Gibbons

Minister for Health and Social Services

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